



Volunteer Spotlight

Nancy Pfeffer, Operation Jump Start

As an environmental activist and policy advisor, Nancy Pfeffer is used to fighting for the underdog. As a volunteer, she's also putting her skills to use helping underprivileged teenagers reach above and beyond their expectations.

About Nancy

As an environmental policy consultant, Nancy Pfeffer is used to working for the underdog. For the past several years, Pfeffer has also been putting her experience and energy to work helping a disadvantaged high-school student reach her potential.

Pfeffer, who runs a [successful consulting business](#), wanted to make good use of her flexible schedule by giving back to her community. Formerly an adult literacy mentor, she knew that her knowledge would best be shared in a one-on-one setting.

She found her perfect volunteer match in Operation Jump Start.



[Operation Jump Start](#) was founded in 1994 in Long Beach, Calif. with the goal of helping students overcome adversity and reach for higher education. The program pairs students with volunteer mentors, and supplements their schoolwork with workshops on essay writing and financial aide, leadership development activities, and guided tours of various college campuses.

Since its start, OJS has helped 80 students graduate from high school, with an amazing 97 percent eventually moving on to higher education.

Pfeffer and her mentee, Yanira, spend most of their time on school work – but they also won't pass up an opportunity to get out and explore. Together the two frequent local museums, zoos, fashion shows, the movies, and concerts; they even sang in the school holiday show together!

"I know I'm not like anyone else in Yanira's life," Pfeffer says, "It's been amazing to get to know her and to watch her change, grow, and learn."

Much to Pfeffer's excitement, Yanira plans to attend John Jay College in New York City, where Pfeffer's father taught for his entire career. "These days I share her dream, and if she

gets accepted I hope to travel to New York with her and show her around," Pfeffer says.

Pfeffer isn't the only one who is happy about Yanira's plans. Dara Cerwonka, executive director of Operation Jump Start, says, "Nancy is an inspirational mentor. She is kind and motivating in a quiet way. Her student loves her. She is a wonderful volunteer."

Pfeffer is the perfect example of the impact that just one person can have. By realizing her strengths, and knowing what she was looking for out of volunteering, Pfeffer was able to positively affect change. "I truly believe each person has something valuable to offer, and it's great to help my student figure out for herself what that is" she says.

Find a way to use your own knowledge and experience to change the world at VolunteerMatch.org today!

Operation Jump Start

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Check out opportunities at [Operation Jump Start](#) on VolunteerMatch!